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September 29, 2009

Ms. Sophia Fisher, Planner
Department of Planning
County of Loudoun
1 Harrison Street, S.E, #300
Leesburg, VA 20175

RE: ZMOD 2008-0117, Belmont Executive Center CSP

Dear Ms. Fisher:

Thank you for providing copies of the comments submitted by the referral agencies with regard to the above referenced application. We have prepared responses, in table format, which may be found in the attached document entitled "Comment Responses" and dated September 29, 2009.

Our resubmission includes the Revised Comprehensive Sign Plan, including all other attachments for reference (7 copies) along with the "Comment Responses".

We would look forward to discussing the schedule for the Planning Commission public hearing and the Board of Supervisors public hearing.

If you should need any additional information or copies, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

SACK HARRIS & MARTIN, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith C. Martin", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Keith C. Martin

Enclosures

Copy to:
Richard Keyser
Adam Steiner



ZMOD 2008-0117, 2008-0015, 2008-0016
BELMONT EXECUTIVE CENTER CSP

COMMENT RESPONSES
September 29, 2009

COMMENT	RESPONSE
Department of Planning – June 2, 2009	
1. Staff recommends that the proposed sign plan commit to freestanding signage (specifically entrance monument and directional signs) that is compatible with similar signage that has already been constructed within the residential portion of Belmont Country Club. Revisions to the General Design Guidelines (pgs. 5 – 7) are recommended.	<p>The design intent from the very beginning was to create a unique set of signs that would unify the entire Belmont Exec Center project while still distinguishing it as something separate from the existing Belmont County Club. The Executive Center project is completely different in nature and uses than Belmont Country Club. The Applicant wanted the signage to be much more contemporary and complimentary to the architecture of the office buildings and retail center. We therefore specifically chose to not use brick and instead use stone, metal and cementitious materials. Our font selections (Birch Std, Birch Std Expanded and Swiss 721) are contemporary and more modern than the fonts used on the existing Belmont signage (Times New Roman and italicized script).</p> <p>A potential compatible sign program would be the use of a natural, but still refined, material such as the stone work. The jaramite/precast panels would also be complimentary to the existing Belmont precast panels. A compatible plant material palette consistent with Belmont is also proposed.</p>
2. Staff recommends that the Applicant reevaluate and significantly reduce both the number and size of freestanding signs that are proposed in the sign plan. Overall, the proposed signs should create a sense of hierarchy, with the largest signs at the periphery of the development, scaling down to smaller signs at internal vehicular entrances. They should be limited to the	Total number of signs has been significantly reduced. Sign hierarchy has been improved with reduction in number of signs and better description of purpose of each sign to aid visitors. Not all large signs need to be at the perimeter, but located at the main focal points at perimeter and internally (i.e. M2 signs). The signs are attractive and helpful without being distracting. While a majority of the signs are scaled to human

<p>minimum number necessary (for example, one per vehicular entrance), serve a clear need at that location, and not be distracting to drivers. All signs should also be designed to be human-scale and consistent with other freestanding signs in the development, including those that currently exist within the residential sections of Belmont Country Club.</p>	<p>proportions, a few directional signs are located adjacent to roadways and intended for visitors in vehicles traveling at higher rates of speed for easy recognition.</p> <p>Retail experience shows that without enough signage to be comparable to other retail markets, the attractive retail tenants will not continue to move to Loudoun County. The proposed signage size and quantity is comparable to other recently approved CSP's (i.e., Brambleton and Arcola) and provides just enough wayfinding and tenant identification to be competitive with other projects and markets.</p>
<p>3. Building Mounted Signs</p> <p>a. Staff requests confirmation that the illustrations depicting the proposed building-mounted office signage accurately show the maximum size of signs that would be permitted per the proposed regulations. An illustration depicting the alternative situation (i.e., one large sign at 0.5 square feet per linear foot of building frontage) should be provided. Staff also recommends that the Applicant commit to a consistent color and design for signs that are located on the same façade.</p> <p>b. Staff requests clarification on the potential combination of signs being requested in order to assess the sign plan in relation to the guidelines found in the Revised General Plan and the Retail Plan for unified graphic design. Overall, the Applicant should reexamine the overall size and number of the building-mounted signage for the various retail tenants and confirm that the signage depicted in the proposed sign plan accurately illustrates what would be permitted should it be approved.</p>	<p>Graphics for B1 signage have been revised to show two (2) possible scenarios for signage, both of which depict the maximum possible signage per façade. The sign plan requests flexibility in color and design for signs on the same façade in order to accommodate varying corporate logos and branding colors. In order to avoid visual contrasts, the plan limits only 2 signs per façade and 3 signs per building.</p> <p>Total number of signs has been significantly reduced. While we can control unifying design characteristics in the freestanding signage, the building mounted signage needs to be highly flexible to allow for various corporate branding and logos. They will be consistent in that they will all have size / material restrictions and similar ratio of signage to building frontage. The graphics have all been revised to show examples(s) with the maximum allowable sign area.</p>

4. Information should be provided regarding whether the Applicant seeks to modify the Zoning Ordinance regulations governing temporary signage.	We have added a new sign type to the CSP for the temporary leasing signage and have shown the locations on the new Temporary Sign Map. These signs have been designed to reflect the characteristics of the permanent signage in order to be aesthetically appealing until they are removed. There are 11 total leasing signs shown.
5. Staff recommends a condition of approval that individual signs and associated landscaping materials will be maintained in good condition.	The Applicant will maintain the signs and the landscaping and has no issue with this as a condition of approval.
Department of Building and Development – June 2, 2009	
1. Sheet 5 – Sign Locations references Section 512 of the 1993 Zoning Ordinance. Please correct this to reference Section 5-1200 of the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance.	Comment acknowledged and language has been corrected.
2. Sheet 5 – Sign Permits states the landlord will provide a letter to tenants indicating which sign types they are allowed. Please note this letter from the landlord should accompany the sign permit application.	Comment acknowledged and language has been corrected.
3. It is unclear why Sheets 8a and 8b have been included with the sign plan.	There is no reference to these sheets in the current version of the CSP.
4. Sheets 9-17 seem unnecessary as the detail sheets and matrix provide all the information needed for the sign plan. There are discrepancies between these sheets and the rest of the comprehensive sign plan. Should the applicant decide to keep these sheets, please be advised the most restrictive regulations will apply when administering the comprehensive sign plan.	These sheets have been eliminated from the CSP.
5. Sheet 18 - A1 Primary Entrance Sign – None of the proposed A1 signs are located at vehicular entrances into the development.	It is submitted that strict interpretation of a "vehicular entrance" runs contrary to good wayfinding signage and previous precedent set by

<p>Entrance signs are to be located at the vehicular entrance into the development, not at the intersection of roadways or along interchange ramps. Staff suggests the more appropriate place for A1 signs are at the locations identified as the A2 sign locations.</p>	<p>other CSP. Many of the big signs at Brambleton and Arcola are NOT at a vehicular entrance but rather a corner of the property. Furthermore, A1 signage contains the overall project name and is necessary at the main intersections in order to delineate between adjacent uses and to identify arrival at the project. If the A1 signage were placed at A2 locations, sectors within the project would not be properly identified and the sign messages would be both redundant and confusing. Each sector is different, requiring a unique sign message; however each sector is part of "Belmont Executive Center" making A1 signs at the perimeter of the project extremely vital.</p>
<p>6. Sheet 20 - A3 are listed as directional signs. Section 5-1204(D)(3)(k) is the section for PD-OP Development Entrance Signs. As these are listed as directional, the section being modified is not correct. The correct section for directional signs is Section 5-1204(D)(7)(h). Directional signs are required to be located where there is a change in direction. As proposed, these signs are located along travel ways where there is not a change in direction.</p>	<p>We have changed the sign category to be modified to 5-1204(D)(7)(h) as requested. These signs are located along travel ways prior to "A change in direction" in an effort to allow drivers time to make crucial directional decisions. The A3 signs are only 9 s.f. each. Placing them along travel ways allows them to remain small because it provides the driver time to figure out where they are going before having to make the actual change in direction. This also makes it safer for both drivers and pedestrians.</p>
<p>7. Sheet 21 - A4 are listed as directional signs. Section 5-1204(D)(3)(k) is the section for PD-OP Development Entrance Signs. As these are listed as directional, the section being modified is not correct. The correct section for directional signs is Section 5-1204(D)(7)(h).</p>	<p>We have reclassified the A4 to be modified under 5-1204(D)(7)(h) as requested. Each of these signs are located in areas with a low speed limit and are located directly at areas with a change in direction.</p>
<p>8. Sheet 23 – C 1-0 Primary Hotel Signage – The applicant has not indicated a maximum number of signs per façade for this use type. Sheet 73 shows the majority of the signs to be on the front façade with a small area on the side façade designated for signage placement. Sheet 23 shows 3 signs on this</p>	<p>Signage for the hotel has been completely revised. The current sign program represents the current prototypical signage preferred for a Marriott Springhill Suites. If the selected hotel tenant requires different signage, the applicant may elect to amend the CSP.</p>

<p>façade. Please update this sheet to show the maximum number of signs allowed. Additionally, please provide more detail regarding the purpose of the signs. 10 signs on the hotel would seem excessive.</p>	
<p>9. Sheet 25 – E 1-0 Pad Site Tenant Signage – This pad side appears to be located within the PD-CC-CC zoning district, therefore the section to be modified should not be 5-1204(D)(3)(ii) but Section 5-1204(D)(3)(d). As proposed, 18 signs per tenant would seem excessive.</p> <p>26. Sheets 56 through 70 – Appendix G – Please be advised the column for total aggregate sign area is for the total square footage for all signs of each type. In some instances, the total aggregate for all signs is less than the maximum area of any one sign. Matrix has been corrected to indicate TOTAL aggregate for each sign type.</p>	<p>The E1 sign type is only applicable to Bldg XI which is located in the PD-OP district. We have clarified on the E1 signage graphics that this only applies to Bldg XI. Please note that these are freestanding buildings with full 4-sided exposure. There are limits as to how many signs can be provided per façade and limits on how many different sign types can be used. The appendices have been revised to include more detailed descriptions of each sign type and spell out of the restrictions for each. The examples shown represent the maximum signage the tenant could put on the façade.</p>
<p>10. Sheet 26 – E 1-1 Pad Site Tenant with awnings - This pad site appears to be located within the PD-CC-CC zoning district, therefore the section to be modified should not be 5-1204(D)(3)(ii) but Section 5-1204(D)(3)(d). As proposed, 12 signs per tenant would seem excessive. In addition, it is not clear if the awnings will have signage on them. If so, please be sure the awning signs have been included in the overall maximum number of signs. Should the awnings have signage, the primary façade could have as many as 9 signs which is not consist with the 4 per primary façade as listed.</p>	<p>The E1-1 sign type is only applicable to Bldg XI which is located in the PD-OP district. We have clarified on the E1-1 cut sheet that this only applies to bldg XI. These also are freestanding buildings with full 4-sided exposure with limits on how many signs per façade and the number of different sign types. Note that with the use of the awnings the total allowable square footage and the number of signs is reduced. The actual allowable sign area on an awning is very restrictive (see appendices E and F).</p>
<p>11. Sheet 28 – F 2 Secondary Church Signage – As these signs are off-site signs, they are not permitted.</p>	<p>This sign has been deleted.</p>
<p>12. Sheet 29 and 30 – M 1-0 and M 1-1 – Primary Entrance Sign and Vehicular Entrance Signs – Sign M 1-0 is labeled on M 1 on the site plan sheets. Please be sure to</p>	<p>Labels have been coordinated. Similar to the A1 signage, these M signs are located at main intersections in order to effectively delineate between adjacent uses and arrival at the</p>

<p>have consistency with the labeling. Entrance signs are to be located at the vehicular entrance into the development, not at the intersection of roadways or along interchange ramps. As proposed, these signs are not located at a vehicular entrance into the development.</p>	<p>destination. Similar sign locations have been approved at Brambleton and Arcola.</p>
<p>13. Sheet 31 – M 2 – Primary Retail Sign – These signs are proposed to be 21'6" in height and 164 square feet in size per side. This is almost 3 times the height permitted by the zoning ordinance for ground mounted signs and over 5 times the maximum square foot permitted by the zoning ordinance. To be more consistent with the zoning ordinance, staff suggests the height of the sign as well as the square footage be reduced. Typically, to achieve a greater square footage and sign mass, the height of the sign is in turn reduced. The applicant will also need to show the landscape base as with previous monument signs.</p>	<p>The sign type has been reduced in height and width with a corresponding reduction in total sign area. The overall reduction in height, width and mass propose signage which is less than that approved at Brambleton and Arcola. These signs need to be big enough to be visible to vehicles traveling 45 mph. Graphic now shows landscape treatment at base.</p>
<p>14. Sheet 33 -M4 are listed as directional signs. Section 5-1204(D)(3)(c) is the section for PD-CC-CC Development Entrance Signs. As these are listed as directional, the section being modified is not correct. The correct section for directional signs is Section 5-1204(D)(7)(h). Directional signs are required to be located where there is a change in direction. As proposed, these signs are located along travel ways where there is not a change in direction.</p>	<p>We have reclassified the M4 to be modified under 5-1204(D)(7)(h) as requested. This is the same basis of response as the A3 signs relative to "vehicular entrance".</p>
<p>15. Sheet 36 – O 1-0 Pad Site Tenant Signage – As proposed, 18 signs per tenant would seem excessive.</p>	<p>Please note that these are freestanding buildings with full 4-sided exposure. There are limits as to how many signs can be provided per façade and limits on how many different sign types can be used. The appendices now have good descriptions of each sign type and spell out the restrictions for each. The examples shown represent the maximum signage the tenant could put on the façade.</p>

<p>16. Sheet 37 – O 1-1 Pad Site Tenant with awnings - As proposed, 12 signs per tenant would seem excessive. In addition, it is not clear if the awnings will have signage on them. If so, please be sure the awning signs have been included in the overall maximum number of signs. Should the awnings have signage, the primary façade could have as many as 9 signs which is not consistent with the 4 per primary façade as listed.</p>	<p>Similar justification in relation to freestanding buildings with four sided exposure. Note that with the use of the awnings the total allowable square footage and the number of signs is reduced. The actual allowable sign area on an awning is very restrictive (see appendices E and F).</p>
<p>17. Sheet 38 – O 2-0 – Pad Site Tenant Canopy Sign - Staff would like more information regarding this sign type such as which tenant use types would be permitted this sign and for what purpose. It appears this sign would be in addition to the 12 to 18 signs already proposed for pad site tenants. Please be advised these signs may not used for the purpose of advertising.</p>	<p>The Permanent Sign Map shows the specific locations for this sign type and it is only on Bldgs VI and VIII. We intend to put a corporate logo on canopies. If this is on a bank the "signs" may say Entrance, ATM or Drive Thru but they would also probably include a bank logo. It is modified under 5-1204(3)(d) which allows logos.</p>
<p>18. Sheet 39 – S 1-0 – Primary inline retail tenant front signage – While the total aggregate sign area is limited to 1.75 square foot of signage per linear foot of building frontage, twenty (20) signs on a single façade would seem excessive for a single user. As shown on this example, twelve (12) of the signs would be window signs. As Appendix B on Sheet 50 indicates, advertisements are not permitted with window signage. Staff is not clear on what the twelve (12) window signs would be.</p>	<p>The multiplier being used has been modified to 1.5 s.f. per linear foot of signage and the number of signs per façade has been reduced to 11. There are also limits as to how many signs can be provided per façade and limits on how many different sign types can be used. The appendices now have good descriptions of each sign type and spell out of the restrictions for each. The examples shown represent the maximum signage the tenant could put on the façade. Window signs could provide the name of services provided in the grocery. Note that since this signage is computed with the same multiplier as the other adjacent retail inline signage the density of signage across the frontage would be comparable across the entire elevation.</p>

<p>19. Sheet 40 – S 1-1 – Inline retail tenant front signage – This sheet should be updated to show the maximum number of signs allowed. As this example has two public entrances, the number of signs for this tenant would be 10 signs, which would seem excessive.</p>	<p>Sign type has been revised to show the maximum allowable sign area in the example. We have removed the “per public entrance” stipulation to number of signs. Inline retail is allowed a maximum of 6 signs total with only 1 sign band sign and each tenant can only have 3 different types of signs. Appendices have been revised to further explain the restrictions and define how all examples are derived.</p>
<p>20. Sheet 41 – S 1-2 – Inline retail tenant front signage with awning – It is not clear if the awnings will contain signage. If so, the number of signs per public entrance will need to reflect the total including awning signage. A sign band and awning sign would not seem necessary for a single public entrance.</p>	<p>Sign type has been revised to clarify that awnings may contain signage. The Appendix clarifies that if the tenant has awnings, they get less overall signage. Awning signage is generally not lit, so most tenants will have a sign band sign and awning signage.</p>
<p>21. Sheets 42 -44 and sheet 47 – S 2-0, S 2-1, S 2-2, and Z6 – The inline tenant rear sign should be referenced on the front signage. It is suggested a note be added to the drawings as well as the additional requirements section on the comparison matrix. An awning in addition to the sign band would seem excessive. In addition, it would appear sign type Z 6 is not needed as signs S 2-0, S 2-1 and S 2-2 serves the purpose to identify the tenant.</p>	<p>We have added a note "Refer to Sign Type X-X for additional signage allowed for this tenant on the front / rear of the building. Each sign type is calculated independently" to the front and rear signage types that the same tenant may have signage on the front and rear, but that they are not computed together towards any maximum aggregate. Rear building signage is less than the front. The 2 types will never be visible at the same time and serve a somewhat different purpose. Note that graphic examples show the maximum allowed and along with the restrictions on the awnings, there is very little signage on the rear. Sign Type Z6 has been deleted.</p> <p>The rear signage area requested is very small relative to the size of the tenant. It is important to use signage to aid wayfinding for visitors approaching from the rear of the building. The back of the building is exposed to Russell Branch Pkwy and buffered by landscaping.</p>
<p>22. Sheet 45 – Y 1-0 Pad Site restaurant signage – The applicant is proposing to modify Section 5-1209(D)(3)(d). The correct</p>	<p>Section of ZO modified has been updated as requested. This sign type is an exact replica of type E1-0. As with E1-0 these buildings are</p>

<p>section for freestanding restaurants is Section 5-1204(D)(3)(bb) or 5-1204(D)(3)(cc) depending upon the size of the restaurant. As proposed, 18 signs per tenant would seem excessive.</p>	<p>freestanding with four sided exposure. There are limits on the number of signs per façade and the number of different sign types.</p>
<p>23. Sheet 46 – Y 1-1 Pad Site restaurant with awnings - The applicant is proposing to modify Section 5-1209(D)(3)(d). The correct section for freestanding restaurants is Section 5-1204(D)(3)(bb) or 5-1204(D)(3)(cc) depending upon the size of the restaurant. As proposed, 12 signs per tenant would seem excessive. In addition, it is not clear if the awnings will have signage on them. If so, please be sure the awning signs have been included in the overall maximum number of signs. Should the awnings have signage, the primary façade could have as many as 9 signs which is not consistent with the 4 per primary façade as listed.</p>	<p>Section of ZO modified has been updated as requested. This sign type is an exact replica of type E1-1. The Y1-1 sign is identical to the O1-1 sign except that the Y is in the PD-OP and the O sign is in the PD-CC and thus subject to the different sign type mod. The Y1-1 is for a freestanding building with an awning and when they have an awning, they actually get less signage. Appendices E and F describe the signage allowed on the awnings and it is very restrictive. The new appendices graphics are clear that the awnings will indeed have signage and are clear in defining that the awning signs do count towards the overall number of signs they get. They cannot have 9 signs per façade, they can still only have 4 per façade which includes any awning signs.</p>
<p>24. Sheet 48 – Z 7 – Freestanding tenant signage – Section 5-1204(D)(3)(ii) is to be used when the use is not listed within the sign matrix. These signs should be listed as an additional signs under the appropriate sign type. For example, the freestanding auto service station monument sign should be included with sign type N, freestanding bank signs should be included with the appropriate pad site signage, freestanding restaurant monument signs should be included with sign type Y, etc.</p>	<p>Combining the freestanding signs with the building mounted signs may create a confusing aggregate limitation. Our approach avoids the situation where if the tenant did not want the freestanding sign, they would get more signage on the building than another tenant. We are trying to be very clear on how much signage they get on the building so that all tenants are similar. The plan clarifies how big each type can be. These signs are important to be located in the parking field to help people know where to park and guide them to the front door or drive thru.</p>
<p>25. Sheet 54 – Appendix E awning and eyebrow signage – The note states fringe sign does not county towards aggregate sign area. The fringe sign does count toward the aggregate sign area.</p>	<p>Appendix has been revised to clarify all aspects of the awning signage. Agreed that fringe sign is not excluded.</p>

26. Sheets 56 through 70 – Appendix G –
Please be advised the column for total
aggregate sign area is for the total square
footage for all signs of each type. In some
instances, the total aggregate for all signs is
less than the maximum area of any one
sign.

Matrix has been corrected to indicate total
aggregate for each sign type.